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PSC Approves Uber's License to Operate in Montana

Company can begin operating immediately

HELENA, Mont. –December 15, 2015– The Montana Public Service Commission approved the license of Rasier-MT, LLC (Uber) on a 4-1 vote Tuesday, making them the first Technology Network Carrier (TNC) transportation company authorized to operate in Montana.

“By embracing advancing companies like Uber, Montanans not only have another option to get from one place to another, but there is now an additional incentive for existing transportation companies to improve as well,” said PSC Chairman Brad Johnson, R-East Helena.

Senate Bill 396, which was drafted in part by PSC Vice Chairman Travis Kavulla, was passed by the 2015 Montana Legislature this past spring, opening the door to app-based ride sharing companies like Uber to operate in Montana. Rasier-MT, LLC (Uber) is currently the only company to have applied for a Class-E TNC license under the new law.

“Before this legislation, the PSC was required to determine whether the public needed a new service. That is a question properly answered by consumers themselves and not a government agency. It’s exciting to see more choices for customers in the transportation marketplace,” said PSC Vice Chairman Travis Kavulla, R- Great Falls.

During the 20 day protest period last month the PSC received one protest of Uber's application, which was from the Montana Authority Holders Association. Upon issuance of a deadline by the Commission for a Notice of Appearance, the protest was withdrawn, allowing the Commission to move forward with the approval of Uber's application without a contested hearing.

In dissenting on the approval, Commissioner Bob Lake, R-Hamilton, said,

"The Commission's actions today gives one type of business model within the transportation industry a special exception that provides an unfair advantage to compete with existing businesses, and we are not doing consumers any favors by doing so. Uber will operate without any oversight from a Montana based agency. This will have a detrimental effect on the current license holders, and by approving this license we are throwing a bunch of people under the bus."

The approval of Rasier-MT, LLC's (Uber's) license is effective immediately and allows the company to begin operating right away.

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